Leaks on CIA Plots Disturb President

By Carroll Kilpatrick 6/18/75
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Ford is unhappy aboot leaks regarding alleged Central Intelligence Agency involvement in assassination attempts, White House press secretary Ron Nessen said yesterday.

"The President feels it is not in the national interest to spew out bits and pieces day after day of information here and there," Nessen said following questions about a report that the White House had discovered new information on assassination discussions in minutes of National Security Council meetings from 1959 to 1963.

Nessen said the President believes information should be carefully collected and analyzed and released in an orderly way. The President believes the special congressional investigating committee headed by Sen Frank Church (D-Idaho) is acting in a responsible way, Nessen said.

He declined to criticize the press or to identify the source of the leaks, but he said the President is "displeased" by the spate of reports on "a matter of great sensitivity."

"All the facts are not known and may never be known," Nessen said. "Information is being dribbled out that does not give a complete picture."

When asked if the White House was trying to cover up some records of CIA activities, Nessen said, "Any suggestion that this President is trying to hide something does not add up because he doesn't have anything to hide."

Nessen said Mr. Ford wants the facts to come out in "an orderly way" and he does not want to see the reputations of past leaders "besmirched" by leaks of incomplete and unsubstantiated information.

The President is cooperating with the Church committee to make all pertinent material available to it, the press secretary said.

Denying that he was trying to censor the press or limit the flow of news, Nessen said the President believes the matter should be handled with "utmost prudence."

It is not fair to history or the public officials invloved to put out information in bits and pieces before careful verification, Nessen said.

The orderly way is for the Church committee and the Attorney General to assemble the relevant information and present it in a proper manner, Nessen said.